

# **CHAPTER 6. SOCIAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

## **6.1 Education, Awareness, and Public Outreach**

Conservation awareness is instrumental to conducting natural resources management. USARAK's approach to awareness stresses education. It provides military personnel and the public with insights into Fort Wainwright's natural environment and conservation challenges. The more people know about the installation's unique natural resources, the more responsibly they will act toward them.

Education also promotes awareness of critical environmental projects and the rationale behind them. Activities such as fish stocking, erosion control, or wildfire suppression, for example, can be accomplished with little conservation awareness effort since soldiers, recreationists, and the general public usually support these easily understood efforts. However, issues such as trespass structures, restrictions on troop operations, nongame management, bear baiting and pesticide use, require effective conservation communication to obtain positive support and, perhaps more importantly, to avoid adverse reactions. A conservation awareness program must be directed to both installation and external interests if it is to be effective.

### **6.1.1 Education, Awareness, and Public Outreach Goals and Objectives**

Education, awareness, and public outreach goals and objectives all contribute to one or more of the overall natural resources program goals of stewardship, military training support, compliance, quality of life, and integration. Education, awareness, and public outreach goals and objectives are:

- Involve the surrounding community in Fort Wainwright's natural resources program.
- Provide an understanding of the Fort Wainwright natural resources program through communication to installation and surrounding communities.
- Provide general conservation education to the Fort Wainwright community.
- Increase understanding of natural resources conservation to youth groups.
- Create at least four natural resources television events per year, with topics chosen by Conservation Branch and Public Affairs Office (PAO).
- Enhance professional skills of the USARAK natural resources staff.
- Interact with other organizations, agencies, and personnel inside and outside of DOD.
- Use the media to educate the Fort Wainwright community regarding uses of natural resources for quality of life enhancement.
- Provide hunters, trappers, and anglers with information needed to enjoy their sports within regulations.
- Provide hunters, trappers, and anglers with information needed to understand their role in natural resources conservation.
- Increase public awareness of natural and cultural resources management on the installation.
- Educate soldiers, the military community and the public on ways to minimize damage from their use of military lands.
- Increase public awareness of recreational opportunities.

### **6.1.2 Education, Awareness and Public Outreach Program Planning**

Education awareness and public outreach program management includes all the planning, budgeting, organizing, and overseeing contracts necessary to implement the education awareness and public outreach program. The primary emphasis for this component of the education, awareness, and public outreach

program is the preparation and update of the education awareness and public outreach management plan every five years and the education awareness and public outreach action plan annually.

**Description and Justification:** Prepare, update, and implement an Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management action plan for Fort Wainwright. The Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management action plan identifies, delineates, and proposes measures to implement public involvement activities on Fort Wainwright. Completing and updating the education, awareness, and public outreach management plan is required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) every five years to implement the INRMP. Per Memorandum DAIM-ED-N, 21 March 1997, this component of the INRMP is a class 1 requirement.

**Measures of Effectiveness:**

- Complete, maintain, and update an education, awareness, and public outreach management plan for Fort Wainwright.
- Provide education opportunities to the military and public.

**Management History:** An Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management plan has not been prepared for Fort Wainwright. Education, awareness and public outreach actions have been performed through other components of USARAK's natural resource programs.

**Current Management:** An Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management plan has not been prepared. If this INRMP is not approved and funded, no Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management plan will be prepared, updated, or implemented.

**Proposed Management:**

**Table 6-1. Education, Awareness and Public Outreach Management Plan.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Conduct annual updates of the Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management action plan.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare and update Education, Awareness and Public Outreach management action plan for the planning period of 2007-2011.	USARAK Conservation	High					x
Complete NEPA documentation for update	USARAK Conservation	High					x

**Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:** There are no alternatives to maintaining a current Education, Awareness and Public Outreach Management Plan in terms of updates at least every five years. NEPA documentation is also legally mandated.

### 6.1.3 Education, Awareness and Public Outreach Survey

This component of the education awareness and public outreach program gathers data about the needs and desires of the Fort Wainwright community concerning natural resources management. Surveys are the

primary tool to collect information from Fort Wainwright users, surrounding community members and land owners, and federal and state agencies who have responsibilities for management of Fort Wainwright. Surveys are used on an as-needed basis.

#### **6.1.4 Education, Awareness, and Public Outreach**

**Description and Justification:** Conduct natural and cultural resources education and awareness about Fort Wainwright. The project will develop informational materials, conduct briefings, attend public meetings and events, and conduct surveys of public desires for natural and cultural resources management on Fort Wainwright that will improve public awareness about the diverse and unique natural and cultural resources that are found at Fort Wainwright. Conducting education, awareness and public outreach is required as mitigation for the five year Section 404 Clean Water Act wetland permit for military training, by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS, and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) to implement the INRMP.

**Measures of Effectiveness:**

- Brief natural resources programs in at least one Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting per post per year.
- Improve public relations through public outreach, education and awareness.
- Create at least four natural resources television events per year, with topics chosen by Natural Resources Branch and PAO.
- Communicate success at sustaining mission activities while preserving Army land.
- Educate land users of their environmental stewardship responsibilities.
- Ensure appropriate command group, mission, and tenant personnel, including environmental compliance officers, receive appropriate natural resources awareness training.

**Management History:** USARAK has been involved in public outreach at Fort Wainwright for many years. Hunting, trapping, and fishing awareness occurs every year. Interpretive panels educating the public on Fort Wainwright's natural resources were installed along the Chena River in 1998-1999.

**Current Management:** There are four components of the education, awareness, and public outreach management program.

*Public Outreach and Awareness* is focused on making the surrounding community aware of natural resources opportunities and programs on Fort Wainwright. Tools to accomplish this project include the natural resources web page, the natural resources newsletter, public meetings, brochures and pamphlets, videos, posters and educational panels at the watchable wildlife viewing platforms and other recreation sites.

*Recreational User Education* provides information to those who will hunt, fish, trap, or engage in other recreational activities on Fort Wainwright. Many nonresident military (those who have lived in Alaska for less than a year) hunters, anglers, and trappers need education on hunting bears and moose, caring for meat, 4-wheel drive operation, outdoor survival, and ethics. Some topics are common to the nation as a whole, but many are specific to the harsh conditions and opportunities of interior Alaska.

USARAK personnel are committed to cultivating a conservation ethic in local youth. Youth education provides conservation education opportunities to young individuals and youth groups in the Fort Wainwright area. Long-term changes in conservation attitudes and knowledge are important aspects to an effective conservation awareness and education program. Such long-term changes are most easily achieved by working with youth, particularly youth groups that are already involved in conservation.

USARAK personnel work with youth groups on conservation programs and, on occasion, give talks to youth groups. Boy Scouts, in particular, need support with projects, merit badges, and conservation education.

*Professional Communications and Training* entails communication and interaction with other professionals in agencies and organizations inside and outside of DOD. Natural resources training will enhance the skills of USARAK's natural resources personnel. Additionally, information on natural resources projects occurring on Fort Wainwright will be accessible to other professionals in similar positions. DOD and Army breakout sessions are held at annual meetings of the Society of American Foresters, National Military Fish and Wildlife Association, ITAM workshop, and Society of Agronomy. These are among the professional societies which meet the professional development needs of USARAK's natural resources managers. Membership in these societies is encouraged. They publish some of the best scientific journals in their professions, and current literature review is a necessary commitment to maintain professional standards. Attending meetings for these societies provides excellent opportunities to communicate with fellow professionals.

Current education, awareness, and public outreach actions will continue if this INRMP is not approved and funded. However, no new actions will be prepared, updated, or implemented.

***Proposed Management:***

**Table 6-2. Education, Awareness, and Public Outreach Management.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Update interpretive panels on watchable wildlife viewing platforms in 2002.	USARAK Conservation	High	x				
Conduct hunting, trapping, and fishing awareness.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Develop an informational sheet about fishing opportunities at Fort Wainwright.	USARAK Conservation	High	x				
Create hunting, trapping, and fishing brochure.	USARAK Conservation	High	x				
Create educational video about natural resources.	USARAK Conservation	High				x	
Attend natural resources training.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Attend DOD natural resources meetings at conferences.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Develop a public and military information and education program for wildland fire awareness, fire prevention, information on active fires on Fort Wainwright, and informational meetings on prescribed fires.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x			

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Develop and construct signs at priority lakes, explaining the importance of lakeshore habitat and ways users can help protect this habitat	USARAK Conservation	High			x		
Prepare annual report on status of all projects	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x

***Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:*** There are many other potential methods for conducting education, awareness, and public outreach management. The proposed management actions listed above carefully balance the needs of the military mission, recreation, and the ecosystem. It was determined, reducing actions would be too minimal or increasing actions would be cost-prohibitive.

### 6.1.5 Education and Public Outreach Responsibilities

DPW holds the responsibility for conducting the education, awareness, and public outreach program. Public Affairs Office is primarily responsible for interacting with the professional news media. All materials developed by the DPW Conservation Branch are required to be reviewed by Public Affairs before they are released in any form to the public.

## 6.2 Outdoor Recreation

According to the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, outdoor recreation is the second highest reason why people live in Alaska, and 71% of Alaskans believe that good hunting and fishing are important.

USARAK strives to maintain an interactive relationship with local communities by providing many recreational opportunities to the public. Fort Wainwright is a large, relatively undeveloped open space. This open space and the outdoor recreational opportunities associated with it are perhaps Fort Wainwright's best attributes in terms of community quality of life. With ever-increasing time to pursue recreational interests, the general public will continue to place more demand on Fort Wainwright's natural resources.

### 6.2.1 Outdoor Recreation Program Goals and Objectives

Outdoor recreation goals and objectives all contribute to one or more of the overall natural resources program goals of stewardship, military training support, compliance, quality of life, and integration. Outdoor recreation goals and objectives are:

- Manage outdoor recreation consistent with needs of the Fort Wainwright military mission.
- Involve the surrounding community in Fort Wainwright's natural resources program.
- Manage outdoor recreation while maintaining ecosystem integrity and function.
- Control the use of off-road vehicles in terms of damage to ecosystem functionality.
- Provide high quality opportunities to the Fort Wainwright community and the general public for hunting, trapping, and fishing within biological carrying capacities of the resources.
- Provide high quality natural resources-based opportunities for other outdoor recreation, such as hiking, skiing, snowmachining, boating, birding, etc.

## 6.2.2 Outdoor Recreation Program Management Plan

**Description and Justification:** Prepare, update, and implement an outdoor recreation management plan for Fort Wainwright. Military and public demand for outdoor recreation on Army posts in Alaska is high. The Fort Wainwright Resource Management Plan (BLM and U.S. Army, 1994) requires the development of an outdoor recreation management plan that is compatible with achieving the military mission. Updates of the outdoor recreation management plan are required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) every five years to implement the INRMP. Per Memorandum DAIM-ED-N, 21 March 1997, this component of the INRMP is a class 1 requirement.

### **Measures of Effectiveness:**

- Complete, maintain, and update the outdoor recreation management plan.
- Maintain and enhance recreational opportunities through outdoor recreation management planning.
- Involve resource agencies in planning for outdoor recreation management and the public in review of the plan.

**Management History:** The first outdoor recreation management action plan for Fort Wainwright was completed in 2001.

**Current Management:** Current management actions to update the outdoor recreation management plan will cease in 2002. If this INRMP is not approved and funded, no new outdoor recreation management plan will be prepared, updated, or implemented. Policies already in place in the current management plan will continue.

### **Proposed Management:**

**Table 6-3. Outdoor Recreation Management Plan.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Conduct annual updates of the outdoor recreation management action plan.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare and update the outdoor recreation management action plan for the planning period of 2007-2011.	USARAK Conservation	High					x
Complete NEPA documentation for update	USARAK Conservation	High					x

**Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:** There are no alternatives to maintaining a current outdoor recreation management plan in terms of updates at least every five years. NEPA documentation is also legally mandated.

## 6.2.3 Outdoor Recreation Monitoring

**Description and Justification:** Monitor recreational use on Fort Wainwright to determine impacts on the ecosystem. Monitoring includes field surveys, aerial surveys, and user surveys to determine location, type, duration and frequency of use. Monitoring of training areas to locate trespass structures to determine areas of use. Recreational use of military land in Alaska creates impacts on military training lands, primarily a result of legal recreational use and illegal trespass of recreational vehicles. A basic tenet of ecosystem management is the importance of human values and use. Fort Wainwright's outdoor recreation program affects ecosystems in terms of both resources extracted (fish and game species, firewood, etc.) and disturbance associated with recreationists. USARAK is well aware of the need to ensure these activities do not significantly impact ecosystem integrity. Conducting outdoor recreation monitoring is required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal legislative EIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) to implement the INRMP.

**Management Areas:** All of Fort Wainwright is monitored for impacts from recreational use.

**Measures of Effectiveness:**

- Monitor the extent and condition of ORV trails.
- Monitor erosion and damage to streambanks and lakeshores.
- Gather fishing use and harvest data opportunistically to determine high use areas and fishing pressure.
- Collect and summarize harvest information from the HTF registrants.
- Collect and compile annual trapper, and black bear baiting harvest reports.

**Management History:** Surveys for trespass structures uses various types of conveyances and equipment. Patrols on Army lands will focused on TFTA and portions of YTA. Data collected from each trespass structure includes GPS location, structure status, potential or actual contamination, solid waste and outbuildings, information on owners, and access issue information. Site information also includes an assessment of safety hazards and impacts to wildlife, wetlands, and training.

**Current Management:** There are a number of elements of the outdoor recreation inventory and monitoring program. Recreational facility inventory, recreational user monitoring, recreational impact monitoring, and trespass structure monitoring and inventory all are components of the outdoor recreation monitoring and inventory program.

**Recreational facility inventory:** A baseline recreational facility inventory delineates and maps recreational trails, campgrounds, cabins, boat ramps, pull outs, lakes and rivers. Documentation includes written paragraphs describing recreational activities associated with various trails and trail networks. Trail maps are developed from digital orthophotos, and ground-truthed by four-wheel drive truck, ATV or snowmachine. Written descriptions are created from direct observation, institutional knowledge and additional field notes.

**Recreational user monitoring:** Recreational user monitoring includes monitoring users during hunting, fishing, and trapping seasons; recording and maintaining a database of users through the HTF process; and conducting recreational user surveys. Aerial surveys are conducted to observe hunting and fishing on remote areas of Fort Wainwright. Hunting, trapping, and fishing permits are required for recreational use on Fort Wainwright. The HTF database is a useful tool to measure the amount of recreational use on Fort Wainwright. The HTF call-in system records user days and location of use on the installation. The HTF database also provides the mailing addresses for potential recreational user surveys. These surveys Can be used to supplement the HTF database or to focus on various recreational activities, concerns and use areas.

*Recreational impact monitoring:* Aerial and on the ground monitoring is conducted to assess the impacts from recreational use on the environment. Recreational use impacts usually result from ORV use, but can also result from foot use along stream and lake banks. Impacts are identified, delineated, mapped and prioritized for repair. Additional recreational use monitoring concentrates on assessing use in critical areas. Special consideration is given to protection of these critical areas (nesting sites, highly erodible areas, etc.) from negative impacts due to outdoor recreation. In addition, USARAK uses aerial photographs or other imagery to monitor long-term changes and effects of recreational use of remote areas.

*Trespass Structure Inventory and Monitoring:* An inventory of encroachment cabin sites and other trespass structures was conducted in 1998-2000. Monitoring of these sites and additions to the inventory is conducted as needed until the issue is resolved. The remote areas of post are flown monthly or as needed to monitor existing structures, to patrol for new construction, undiscovered existing cabins or other trespass. Surveys for trespass cabins use helicopters, all-terrain vehicles, a small plane, and snowmachines. Data collected from each trespass cabin includes GPS location, photographs, structure status, contamination, solid waste and outbuildings, information on owners, and access issue information. Site information also includes an assessment of safety hazards and impacts to wildlife, wetlands, and training. This project is ongoing. Monitoring of sites will be conducted as needed until the issue is resolved. Some level of monitoring will likely occur indefinitely.

Surveys for trespass structures will use various types of conveyances and equipment. Patrols on Army lands will focus on TFTA and portions of YTA. Data collected from each trespass structure will include GPS location, structure status, potential or actual contamination, solid waste and outbuildings, information on owners, and access issue information. Site information will also include an assessment of safety hazards and impacts to wildlife, wetlands, and training.

A 1989/90 study indicated that airboat use in the Tanana Flats Training Area caused increased surface water activity. This conclusion needs to be re-evaluated due to increased airboat use into areas not surveyed in 1989.

Current outdoor recreation monitoring policies will continue if this INRMP is not approved and funded. However, no current management actions will be conducted.

***Proposed Management:***

**Table 6-4. Outdoor Recreation Monitoring.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Identify, delineate, and map impacts from recreational use.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Inventory and map recreational winter trails on Fort Wainwright.	USARAK Conservation	High	x				
Develop recreational trail map for Fort Wainwright.	USARAK Conservation	High		x			
Report annually on the number of recreational users on Fort Wainwright.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Maintain HTF database.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x



OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Develop and conduct surveys of recreational users to determine their needs	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Complete NEPA documentation	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare annual report on status of all projects	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x

***Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:*** There are many other potential methods of conducting outdoor recreation monitoring. However, proposed methods for conducting outdoor recreation monitoring were developed specifically for the Alaskan ecosystems. Other methods could be developed that include collecting data at many more points per year, but these would be cost-prohibitive.

## 6.2.4 Outdoor Recreation Management

***Description and Justification:*** Manage recreational use on Fort Wainwright to include hunting, trapping, and fishing management, off-road vehicle management, trespass structure abatement and management of other recreational activities. Actions include designating areas for legal use, installing barricades and fencing to control illegal trespass, , developing and installing signs, improving access for canoeing opportunities, and improving access for hunting opportunities. Recreational use, both legal and illegal, impacts the ecosystem and military training lands. If recreational use is not managed, conflicts will continue to occur and recreational use will be limited by the Command. Conducting special interest area management is required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) to implement the INRMP.

### ***Measures of Effectiveness:***

- Increase access opportunities for recreational activities to the extent possible within the framework of the maneuver mission and the capability of the environment to sustain that use.
- Provide recreational opportunities for the military community and the general public.
- Increase watchable wildlife opportunities.
- Allow a minimum of 2000 user days per year.
- Update requirements and restrictions to hunting, trapping and fishing and publish in the HTF regulation supplement annually.
- Maintain access to existing stocked lakes and popular fishing spots along the streams and rivers.
- Mitigate erosion and damage to streambanks and lakeshores by providing improved access.
- Enhance existing fishing areas with parking areas, docks, boardwalks, interpretive signs or other improvements.
- Remove non-registered bait stands.
- Work with the conservation officers to locate bait sites during and after the season to ensure proper signage and cleanup is carried out.
- Work with ADF&G to ensure a sustainable population of game species for harvest.
- Work with ADF&G to ensure a sustainable population of nongame and game species for wildlife viewing.

***Recreational Use Management Areas:*** Fort Wainwright is managed for a number of different types of public recreational use. All areas that are determined open for recreational use may be closed temporarily during periods of military use. All users must daily check in with Fort Wainwright Range Control Office

to determine if areas are open to recreational use. USARAK uses the following classification system to describe recreation areas on the installation. These overlays are available to the public by contacting the Fort Wainwright Range Control Office.

*Open Use Area:* Open to all types of recreation during all seasons, unless closed by the Fort Wainwright Range Control Office.

*Modified Use Area:* Open to all recreational activities during frozen conditions (6+ inches of snowcover). Open to all non-motorized recreation year round.

*Limited Use Area:* Open to all non-motorized recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, skiing, and berry picking) year round but are not open to any type of ORV at any time.

*Closed Area:* Closed to all recreational activities year round. Airfields, Tank Farm, Landfill, Small Arms Ranges, Impact Areas, Ammunition Storage Point.

*Motorized Watercraft Trails:* All motorized watercraft may use only existing naturally occurring channels, watercourses, and waterways. Area is open to ORVs during frozen conditions. Motorized watercraft must maintain safe and prudent speed at all times.

*Summer Trails:* Summer trails are open to ORVs under 1,500 pounds (ATV's, snowmachines, dirt bikes etc.) all year round. Summer Trails are open to ORV's over 1,500 pounds (road vehicles, dune buggies, Argo's, SUSV's etc.) when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover.

*Winter Trails:* Winter trails are open to all ORVs when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover.

These areas are shown in figures 6-1a, 6-1b, 6-1c, and 6-1d.

***Management History:*** Little is known regarding the status of game species in this area prior to the 1940s. Likewise, little information is available on the quality of hunting, fishing, or trapping prior to establishment of Fort Wainwright. Fort Wainwright is recognized for its high quality moose hunting opportunities. Another game species hunted on post is ruffed and spruce grouse. Fort Wainwright also supports a popular fishing program. Fishing opportunities have increased, largely due to fish stocking by ADF&G.

Fishing, hunting, and trapping are important outdoor recreation activities at Fort Wainwright. Hunting and trapping are important to both military personnel and civilians in the area. Angling on Fort Wainwright seems to be more important to the military community, perhaps reflecting the greater knowledge of alternative fishing sites by the public.

Data on permits issued are kept by Military Police wardens and compiled by personnel at natural resources offices at both Fort Wainwright and Eielson AFB. The combined number of permits issued annually decreased between 1991 and 1997, probably reflecting cuts in the number of military personnel on the two installations.

Trapper use of Fort Wainwright has been consistent (16-22 trappers). The desired species can be selected for by the type of set and trap. Therefore, harvest may not be indicative of populations, but rather indicative of the success of serious trappers. Regardless of trends, marten, fox and lynx are the species harvested in greatest numbers. Wolves and wolverines are the most highly sought species.

Chena River is a popular fishing location where grayling, burbot, and northern pike are available year-round, and salmon is a migratory species. There are also fishing opportunities in the Tanana and Wood rivers and some streams, lakes, and ponds. Hunting primarily occurs in YTA and TFTA, but there are also hunting opportunities at Birch Hill and on Eielson AFB. Trapping is done in TFTA and YTA.

ADF&G publishes pamphlets, regulations, and information sheets to assist hunters, anglers, and trappers in the state. Especially pertinent to military personnel are *Hunting on Military Land*, Hunter Information Series #111-6 and *Military Hunters Off Military Land*, Hunter Information Series #111-7.

Air taxi services frequently land passengers on Fort Wainwright to use the military lands for hunting, fishing, and related activities. An example of this is at Blair Lakes, which is largely inaccessible by ground travel during the summer. Pilots acting as guides and outfitters must register as a business with the Director of Personnel and Community Activities. These activities must also be permitted by the BLM under Special Recreation Use Permit guidelines before they are authorized to operate within military boundaries. USARAK must review and concur with all commercial recreational uses.

**Current Management:** There are a number of components of the outdoor recreation program at Fort Wainwright. Hunting, fishing, and trapping are important natural resources-based forms of outdoor recreation. In addition to those activities, there are a wide range of natural resources-related recreational opportunities at Fort Wainwright. They range from more passive activities, such as watching wildlife and picnicking, to very active recreational outlets such as hiking, boating, camping, skiing, and ORV use.

Access onto Fort Wainwright training areas, including TFTA, is controlled by Fort Wainwright Range Control. Contact Range Control on a daily basis to determine if a training area is open and to gain access for recreational use. Rules for recreational access are the same for both military and public users. For instance, if an area is temporarily closed for military training, it is off limits for all military and public recreational users.

*Hunting, Trapping and Fishing:* Hunting and trapping occurs on Fort Wainwright in areas that are open to public access and other recreational uses in GMU 20A. Fort Wainwright Main Post and YTA are in GMU 20B.

Five lakes at Fort Wainwright are stocked by the ADF&G. The ADF&G stocks the ponds and lakes with grayling, rainbow trout, arctic char and king salmon.

Civilians and military personnel who desire to hunt, fish, or trap on military lands are required to obtain a hunting, trapping and fishing (HTF) permit. Permits are free of charge and good for two years. Permits are issued by the Fort Wainwright PMO. Persons are responsible for obtaining state hunting, fishing, or trapping licenses before obtaining their post permits. State licenses are available at the AAFES Sports store.

The ADF&G issues various regulations (trapping, migratory bird hunting, sport fish, and hunting) for hunters, anglers, and trappers in Alaska. AR 200-3, *Natural Resources - Land Forest and Wildlife Management*, and USARAK Regulation 200-3, *Enforcement of Hunting, Trapping and Fishing on Army Lands in Alaska*, are the primary means of establishing controls on hunting, trapping, and fishing as well as other natural resources-related activities on Fort Wainwright. USARAK Reg 200-3 is the regulation pertaining to hunting, trapping, and fishing. Appendix D of the regulation provides information relating to the use of weapons, closed areas, and hunting, fishing, and trapping regulations specific to Fort Wainwright. The Fort Wainwright recreation supplement, updated annually, condenses these regulations and is available to the public.

*Off-Road Recreational Vehicles:* ORV use on Fort Wainwright currently includes airboats, snowmachines, dirt bikes, three and four-wheel ATVs, and four-wheel drive vehicles. These all terrain vehicles (ATVs) are all considered and referred to as ORVs. ORVs are frequently used in association with many activities in the Alaskan Interior including access to hunting, fishing, and trapping areas, recreational riding and other activities. Although the 1998-2002 INRMP considered recreational vehicle use in the summer as incompatible with wetlands management in TFTA, USARAK currently has no policy limiting ORVs in wetlands or other incompatible use areas.

*Other Recreational Activities:* USARAK strives to maintain an interactive relationship with local communities by providing many recreational opportunities to the public. Fort Wainwright has numerous recreational opportunities for members of the military and civilian communities. Other recreational activities include picnicking, camping, hiking, snowshoeing, dog mushing, boating, boating, and berry picking, downhill and cross-country skiing, mountain biking, skeet/trap shooting, archery shooting, and similar activities. Two wildlife viewing platforms and interpretative panels have been installed in locations overlooking the Chena River. Bike paths have also been added.

The Fort Wainwright Outdoor Recreation Center provides equipment, information, and programs to encourage and enhance the recreational use of Alaska's natural resources by the Fort Wainwright community. The center provides:

- Rental equipment for snowmachining, boating, canoeing, boating, fishing, camping, backpacking and bicycling.
- Information on boating safety, trails and waterways, campsites, parks, outdoor activities, equipment, flora, fauna, and outdoor skills.
- Topographic maps and reference books on Alaska natural resources.
- Boating and canoeing safety classes.
- Specialized outdoor clinics.
- Organizes group trips.
- Advertise the sale and purchase of outdoor recreation equipment.
- Reservations made for group use of Glass and Engineer parks.

There are some excellent trails and facilities on post. There are also recreational opportunities within easy driving distance of Fort Wainwright that are not necessarily associated with the military. These include:

- Pathways along the Chena River and scattered through the woods in Glass Park.
- Off-road vehicle trails in the woods in Engineer Park.
- Fifteen miles of borough trails, accessible from the tower at the end of Ski Road.
- Chena River State Recreation Area.
- Summit Trail, a 23-mile trail that begins at Mile 27 on Elliott Highway.
- Pinnell Mountain National Recreation Trail, a 24-mile trail from Twelvemile Summit to Eagle Summit on Steese Highway.
- Granite Tors Trail, a fifteen-mile loop trail, located at 40 mile Chena Hot Springs Road.
- Chatanika River Wayside, campsites and boat launch 39 miles north on Steese Highway.
- Chena River Wayside, picnicking and boating 39 miles east on Richardson Highway.
- Salcha River Picnic Wayside, picnicking and boating 40 miles east on Richardson Highway.
- Harding Lake State Recreation Area, a highly developed park about 42 miles east of Richardson Highway and two miles north.
- Quartz Lake Wayside, fishing, swimming, and boating 85 miles east on Richardson Highway and 3 miles north.
- Clearwater State Campground, boating and camping 95 miles east on Richardson Highway.

- Donnelly Creek State Campground, 28 miles south of Delta Junction.
- Denali National Park and Preserve, full National Park facilities 120 miles south of Fairbanks.
- Denali State Park, wilderness park and camping 190 miles south of Fairbanks.

The Chena River is a popular canoeing or rafting trip that requires about two hours from the canoe launch near the Chena Bend Golf Course to the boat ramp at Glass Park. The launch near the golf course is lacking in aesthetic quality but is functional. The boat ramp at Glass Park was completed in 2001 and serves as a take out point. This project is part of a larger recreational facility construction project by MWR. Picnic facilities have been added to create a day-use area, toilet facilities are provided, and a kiosk is available with canoe trail brochures, hunting supplements, and other recreation information.

Boats with jet engines may be rented from the Outdoor Recreation Center. The Tanana and Wood rivers and the Salchaket Slough offer good boating opportunities. Other boating rivers and streams in the area include the Chatanika, Nenana, Salcha, Tolovana, and Goodpasture rivers and Birch Creek. Popular area lakes include Birch, Harding, Little Harding, Quartz, Lost, Summit, and Paxson.

Fort Wainwright's Glass and Engineer parks are available for use by the local community. Parks have picnic tables, fire rings, trash barrels, latrines, and trails. Overnight camping is permitted in Glass Park. Reservations are made for group use through the Outdoor Recreation Center. The Fort Wainwright community also has access to Birch Lake Recreation Area, 58 miles east of the post along Wainwright Highway. This Air Force facility has cabins, picnic and camping facilities, a boat dock, equipment rental center, lodge, and swimming beach. Seward, Alaska, is the location of the Seward Recreation Camp offering cabins, a lodge with dining facilities, marina, equipment rental, an exchange facility, a trailer camping area, and related services.

*Watchable Wildlife:* The watchable wildlife program provides potential wildlife viewing opportunities for soldiers, civilians, Alaska residents, and visitors, as well as benefits public relations for U.S. Army Alaska. Watchable wildlife programs include wildlife viewing platforms, nature trails, interpretive signs, brochures, facilities, audio visual productions, public presentations, and cooperative publications with local, state, and federal agencies. This program provides recreation and enhances environmental awareness among participants.

*Trespass Structure Abatement:* USARAK is committed to providing high quality recreational opportunities to all users. The Training Area Cleanup (TAC) program helps maintain the training areas by removing residue resulting from improper recreational use. Residue usually consists of tree stands or temporary structures that were not removed at the conclusion of hunting activities. However, some residue in the training areas consists of permanent structures, which constitutes trespass. Trespass cabins are illegal intrusions on public lands, create liabilities for the Army and BLM, and may significantly impact the surrounding environment.

Current outdoor recreation management policies will continue if this INRMP is not approved and funded. However, no current management actions will be conducted.

### ***Proposed Management:***

In addition to continuing current outdoor recreation management, USARAK proposes to implement a new ORV use policy, a new recreational use impact study in TFTA, a new Training Area Recovery Plan, a new hunting, trapping, and fishing (HTF) permit process, and a new call-in system for recreational users. A summary of proposed management actions is shown in Table 6-5.

*USARAK is proposing to implement a new recreational vehicle use policy on Fort Wainwright.* The 1998-2002 Fort Wainwright INRMP determined that certain recreational vehicle use was incompatible with resource stewardship goals in the TFTA and proposed that a new ORV use policy be reviewed and implemented in the 2002-2006 update. Studies indicate that recreational vehicle use is damaging wetlands in TFTA and is increasing. The National Environmental Policy Act and Army Regulation 200-3 state that any activity suspected of causing environmental impacts is to be stopped until study proves otherwise. USARAK reviewed existing Alaska Federal and State Land Use and Off Road Vehicle policies. EO 11989 (Off-Road Vehicles on Public Lands) states that “the respective agency head shall, whenever he determines that the use of off-road vehicles will cause or is causing considerable adverse effects on the soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat or cultural or historic resources of particular areas or trails of the public lands, immediately close such areas or trails to the type of off-road vehicle causing such effects, until such time as such adverse effects have been eliminated and that measures have been taken implemented to prevent such occurrence”. The USFWS recommends a conservative management approach, which includes placing fen wetlands off limits to airboat activity. The current ORV use policy leaves USARAK open to potential litigation (for instance, the National Park Service received an injunction to stop airboat use until they completed an Environmental Impact Study). More importantly, TFTA promises to play a key role in the success of the proposed transformation of the 172<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade to an Interim Brigade Combat Team. It is USARAK’s goal to allow the maximum amount of recreational access and use (both public and military) within the framework of the military mission and the capability of the environment to sustain that use. USARAK also has a Federal resource stewardship responsibility to ensure that these public lands are maintained for perpetuity. After review of existing Alaska Federal and State land use and off road vehicle policies, USARAK intends to emulate these policies in managing its withdrawn lands. Pursuant to EO 11989, the ORV Recreational Access Policy has been proposed to place the same limitations on recreational access within Fort Wainwright as already apply to military vehicles.

The new recreational vehicle use policy will allow access within TFTA to areas that can support motorized recreational vehicle use without damaging sensitive wetlands. In 1999, USARAK obtained a five-year Section 404 Clean Water Act wetlands permit from the Corps of Engineers that restricts military vehicular maneuver in sensitive wetlands while the ground is unfrozen. Through the permitting process, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) were instrumental in helping the Corps of Engineers develop the criteria for defining these sensitive wetlands. As part of its land stewardship responsibilities, USARAK is proposing to impose the same limitations on recreational use in sensitive wetlands that USARAK already has imposed on military use.

*TFTA is a valuable and important training area for both the Army and Air Force in Alaska.* While military vehicular maneuver is restricted from sensitive wetlands during the summer, TFTA provides many other vital training opportunities all year round. TFTA will play an important role in the transformation of the 172<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade to an Interim Brigade Combat Team. Until now, few conflicts have occurred between recreational users and military training in TFTA because of the excellent cooperation between the public and civilian users and the military. However, the amount of airboat use in TFTA continues to increase (almost 20% since 1989). During that same time period, the number of areas available for airboat use has decreased (Copper River Delta Area closed in mid 1990’s, Minto Flats closed in 1995 and Nenana Controlled Use Area closed in 1996, and Bristol Bay Controlled Use Area limited entry in 2002). The recreational vehicle use pressure on TFTA will continue to increase. Increased use of the TFTA by recreational vehicle users and anticipated increases in use by USARAK as a result of transformation may lead to significant conflicts.

*Recreational use on Fort Wainwright is damaging sensitive wetlands.* On TFTA, airboats are primarily used from May through October for hunting, and recreation. Airboats are well suited for use on the shallow Chena and Tanana Rivers, as well as on a unique system of floating mat fens in TFTA (Racine et.

al. 1998). Since these floating mat fens are characterized as sensitive wetlands in the Clean Water Act Section 404 military use wetlands permit, USARAK is proposing management action to minimize impacts to these sensitive wetlands from both military and recreational users. Based on research concluded to date, the USFWS has concluded that changes in the fen habitats of the Tanana Flats are occurring as a result of airboat activity. Preliminary evidence based on the 1989 study on the environmental impacts of airboats on the Tanana Flats suggested that the floating mats should be fairly resistant to airboat damage (Racine et. al 1990). However, further evidence, as outlined in a more detailed 1995 study appearing in Arctic, showed that “the vegetation and soils of floating mat fens in the Tanana Flats have been severely damaged along main airboat trails: there are over 100 km of trails with open-water, stream-like channels on which all of the emergent vegetation and about 50% of the underlying mat have been destroyed” (Racine et. al. 1998).

*Environmental impacts from recreational use on Fort Wainwright are increasing.* “In 1989, the total length of trails was 263 km, of which 37% (99 km) were heavily used main trails, 54% (143 km) were less-used secondary trails, and 8% (22 km) were trails on existing streams. By 1995, the total length of airboat trails had increased by 15%, to 303 km. During that period, trails were extended toward the southeast into the Tanana Flats, from 17 km from the Tanana River access points in 1989 to 26 km by 1995.” (Racine et. al. 1998). By 1999, total length of trails in northwest TFTA had expanded to 314 km. These 314 km trails impact approximately 161 acres of sensitive wetlands, 78 acres of which are permanently damaged by main trails (USARAK, 2001), which do not recover within a few years like abandoned secondary trails (Racine et. al. 1998).

*The proposed ORV policy does not restrict hunting on Fort Wainwright, except in impact areas.* Hunters may continue to use airboats to hunt in the TFTA, although airboats must comply with the following requirements:

All areas that are determined open for recreational use may be closed temporarily during periods of military use. All users must daily check in with Fort Wainwright Range Control Office to determine if areas are open to recreational use. USARAK uses the following classification system to describe recreation areas on the installation. These overlays are available to the public by contacting the Fort Wainwright Range Control Office.

*Open Use Area:* Open to all types of recreation during all seasons, unless closed by the Fort Wainwright Range Control Office.

*Modified Use Area:* Open to all recreational activities during frozen conditions (6+ inches of ice and snowcover). Open to all non-motorized recreation year round.

*Limited Use Area:* Open to all non-motorized recreation (hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, skiing, and berry picking) year round but are not open to any type of ORV at any time.

*Closed Area:* Closed to all recreational activities year round. Airfields, Tank Farm, Landfill, Small Arms Ranges, Impact Areas, Ammunition Storage Point.

*Motorized Watercraft Trails:* All motorized watercraft may use only existing naturally occurring channels, watercourses, and waterways. Area is open to ORVs during frozen conditions. Motorized watercraft must maintain safe and prudent speed at all times.

*Summer Trails:* Summer trails are open to ORVs under 1,500 pounds (ATV's, snowmachines, dirt bikes etc.) all year round. Summer Trails are open to ORV's over 1,500 pounds (road vehicles, dune buggies, Argo's, SUSV's etc.) when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover.

*Winter Trails:* Winter trails are open to all ORVs when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover.

These areas are shown in figures 6-1a, 6-1b, 6-1c, and 6-1d.

Limitations on the use of motorized watercraft is not expected to affect subsistence users. USARAK allows the same exceptions to handicapped individuals for hunting from motorized vehicles as does the State of Alaska.

*The proposed ORV use policy will not significantly impact game management on Fort Wainwright.* The Wildlife Conservation Division of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game states the proposed ORV restrictions will not significantly impact their management goals for the flats or hunter success rates overall. In calendar year 2000, ADF&G also stated that 618 moose were officially reported taken in Unit 20a, but only 38 were reported taken by airboat. Statewide harvest totals for moose have not significantly changed since 1990, even though seasonal restrictions on the use of any motorized vehicles for big game hunting have been implemented in a number of areas, such as Delta, Glacier Mountain, Wood River, Macomb Plateau, Yanert, and LaDue River Controlled Use Areas. The Sport Fish Division states that there is little game fish utilization in areas of the Tanana Flats that are not directly connected to river systems. Fishing that does occur in the area within the streams and sloughs will remain open to public access. Angling opportunity should not be impacted (negatively or beneficially) by the proposed access restrictions.

*USARAK is proposing to implement a Training Area Recovery Plan (TARP) program,* a rotational system of rest, rehabilitation, and erosion control as part of the proposed action (see Section 4.1.4.1). Each training area on Fort Wainwright will be taken out of rotation and placed off limits to military and recreational vehicle once every ten years for a period of two years. Maintenance actions for erosion control, LRAM, range maintenance, and roads and grounds maintenance will be scheduled during the first year each training area is scheduled for rest and repair, although emergency actions to repair damage must take place anytime, anyplace.

*USARAK is proposing to conduct another more detailed study to assess the impacts of recreational vehicles* on sensitive wetlands and to evaluate the potential indirect impacts on hydrology, effects of noise on wildlife, and conflicts among hunters. During the multi-year study, the study area will be divided into three parts. Zone 1 will be open to all types of recreational use with no restrictions or limitations. Zone 2 will open to all recreational activities during frozen conditions (6+ inches of ice and snowcover) and will be open to all non-motorized recreation year round, including hunting. In addition, all motorized watercraft may use only existing naturally occurring channels, watercourses, and waterways. Motorized watercraft must maintain safe and prudent speed at all times. Zone 2 is open to ORVs during frozen conditions. Summer trails in Zone 2 are open to ORVs under 1,500 pounds (ATV's, snowmachines, dirt bikes etc.) all year round. Summer Trails are open to ORV's over 1,500 pounds (road vehicles, dune buggies, Argo's, SUSV's etc.) when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover. Winter trails are open to all ORVs when there is 6+ inches of ice and snow cover. Zone 3 will be placed totally off limits to all military and recreational vehicle use (except those involved in the study). Zone 3 will be open to non-motorized forms of recreation, including hunting. Hunters are allowed motorized access to the south bank of the Tanana River bordering Zone 3, but must park motorized vehicles on the shore and use non-motorized forms of transportation to gain access into Zone 3. In addition, all approved airstrips and open water remain open to airplane use. Zone 3 must include currently used airboat and ATV trails for the study to evaluate regeneration. The closed area must also be large enough to evaluate the exclusion of noise impacts on wildlife. The proposed study boundaries are shown in Figure 6-1d. The study boundaries may be subject to modification based on the requirements of the experimental design parameters after consultation with interested user groups.



If the study reveals at any time significant damage occurring in the portion of the study area open to all types of recreational use, USARAK may choose to place limitations on recreational use as described above. If the study reveals that there are no significant long-term impacts to sensitive wetlands from recreational vehicle use, then USARAK will re-evaluate the proposed ORV access policy in five years during the next update of the INRMP.

**Table 6-5. Outdoor Recreation Management.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Implement ORV use policy	USARAK DPTSM / Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct recreational use impact study in TFTA.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Implement Training Area Recovery Plan (TARP) Program	USARAK DPTSM / Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Implement new hunting trapping and fishing (HTF) permit process.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x			
Implement Call-in System.	USARAK Conservation	High	x				
Manage hunting, trapping, and fishing user access.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare and update annual hunting, trapping, and fishing harvest report.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Create watchable wildlife driving tour and brochure.	USARAK Conservation	High			x		

***Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:*** There are many other potential methods for conducting outdoor recreation management. The proposed management actions listed above carefully balance the needs of the military mission, recreation, and the ecosystem. Providing fewer outdoor recreational opportunities would impact the Fort Wainwright community and the public. For instance, a total ban on recreational access and use would not meet the requirements of the Sikes Act to allow recreational access and use, could negatively impact game management, and may negatively impact public relations with the Fairbanks community. Providing additional outdoor recreational opportunities would be cost prohibitive to the Army and impact its mission. Removing all use limitations on recreational vehicles in sensitive wetlands would not meet the requirements of the Sikes Act and could limit the Army's ability to train soldiers.

## 6.2.5 Outdoor Recreation Program Responsibilities

The Environmental Resources Department has responsibility for:

- Management of natural resources.
- Coordinated selection and designation of installation outdoor recreation areas.
- Coordination of the use of outdoor recreation areas and their maintenance.
- Prevention of environmental degradation using limitations or closures on the use of recreational areas in coordination with the Directorate of Community Activities.

The Community Recreation Division is responsible for:

- Movement of persons, special events, and organizational elements of outdoor recreation.
- Determining the need for various outdoor recreation activities (exclusive of those involving consumptive use of wildlife).
- Requesting the designation of recommended areas for outdoor recreation use.
- Administering the recreation aspects of approved programs.
- Issuing use permits to individuals and groups when their requests for recreation access meet policy requirements (and sending copies of such licenses to the EA).

DPTSM is responsible for scheduling and controlling military and recreational access into training areas and removing trespass structures.

## **6.3 Conservation Enforcement**

Many aspects of natural resources management require effective enforcement if they are to be successful. Such features as harvest controls, protection of sensitive areas, pollution prevention, hunting and fishing, recreation, nongame protection, and others are dependent upon effective law enforcement.

### **6.3.1 Conservation Enforcement Goals and Objectives**

Conservation enforcement goals and objectives all contribute to one or more of the overall natural resources program goals of stewardship, military training support, compliance, quality of life, and integration. Conservation enforcement goals and objectives are:

- Provide professional enforcement of natural resources-related laws.
- Interact with the public
- Enforce laws and regulations pertaining to implementation of the natural resources program.
- Protect sensitive species and wetlands.
- Use enforcement personnel to enhance the overall natural resources program.

### **6.3.2 Conservation Enforcement Program Planning**

Conservation enforcement program management and planning includes all the planning, budgeting, overseeing contracts, and organization necessary to implement the conservation enforcement program. One emphasis for this component of the conservation enforcement program is to prepare and update the conservation enforcement management and action plan.

**Description and Justification:** Prepare, update, and implement a Conservation Enforcement management plan for Fort Wainwright. The plan is jointly developed by USARAK Natural Resources and the Fort Wainwright PMO to ensure a solid working relationship is forged between the two offices. This action plan outlines responsibilities, communication, duties, regulations, and provisions for carrying out natural resources wildlife enforcement. Protocols are developed to address communications, meetings, after-action reports, and chain-of-command. The second emphasis of conservation enforcement program planning and management is to prepare and update USARAK Regulation 200-3 and hunting and fishing supplement. Completing and updating the conservation enforcement management plan is required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) every five years to implement the INRMP. Per Memorandum DAIM-ED-N, 21 March 1997, this component of the INRMP is a class 1 requirement.

***Measures of Effectiveness:***

- Complete, maintain, and update a conservation enforcement management plan for Fort Wainwright.
- Complete, maintain, and update USARAK Regulation 200-3.

***Management History:*** The first conservation enforcement management action plan for Fort Wainwright was completed in 2001.

***Current Management:*** Current management actions to update the conservation enforcement management plan will cease in 2002. If this INRMP is not approved and funded, no new management plan will be prepared, updated, or implemented. Policies already in place in the current management plan will continue.

***Proposed Management:***

**Table 6-6. Conservation Enforcement Management Plan.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Conduct annual updates of the conservation enforcement management action plan.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare and update the conservation enforcement management action plan for the planning period of 2007-2011.	USARAK Conservation	High					x
Complete NEPA documentation for update.	USARAK Conservation	High					x

***Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:*** There are no alternatives to maintaining a current conservation enforcement management plan in terms of updates at least every five years. NEPA documentation is also legally mandated.

### **6.3.3 Conservation Enforcement Surveillance**

During the fall hunting season, USARAK personnel use aircraft to monitor any trespass within the impact areas, other restricted / prohibited areas on post and the military boundaries. Aircraft and other conveyances will be used to ensure compliance with game laws and military land use regulations.

### **6.3.4 Conservation Enforcement**

***Description and Justification:*** Conservation enforcement on Fort Wainwright includes enforcement of all natural resources-related and environmental laws, enforcement of trespass, interaction with the public, and conservation officer training. Effective law enforcement is critical to natural resources conservation and the continuance of hunting, trapping, and fishing programs on a sustained basis. Trespass is often the first step to most illegal range activities. Therefore, reducing illegal trespass could reduce illegal range activity. Conducting conservation enforcement is required by Public Law 106-65 (Military Land Withdrawal Act) as mitigation for the land withdrawal LEIS and Public Law 86-797 (Sikes Act) to implement the INRMP.

### ***Measures of Effectiveness:***

- Reduce the number of natural resources related violations by the public during 2002-2006.
- Increase public awareness of USARAK's commitment to conserving the environment during 2002-2006.
- Increase the coverage and frequency of conservation enforcement activities on Fort Wainwright.
- Increase the number of contacts with the public during 2002-2006.

***Management History:*** Fish and wildlife enforcement on Fort Wainwright was the responsibility of the Fort Wainwright Military Police (MP) until 2000. During 1999, a change in the MP unit structure reduced the number of Fort Wainwright MP game wardens assigned to fish and wildlife enforcement duties. Because of BRAC, the Fort Wainwright MP unit was given the mission to provide enforcement for Fort Greely. Fort Wainwright does not have enough MPs to provide adequate fish and wildlife enforcement. In 2000, through authority of the Sikes Act, implemented a contract to provide conservation enforcement. The contract law enforcement officers will report to the Provost Marshall, but are limited to conservation enforcement duties by the bounds of their contract.

***Current Management:*** There are five components of the USARAK conservation enforcement program: enforcing conservation laws, reducing theft and vandalism, interacting with the public, enforcing trespass, and conservation officer training.

Enforcement of laws primarily aimed at protecting wildlife and other natural resources is an integral part of the installation's natural resources management program. Game laws must be enforced in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and as approved by the Commander in this INRMP. Enforcement of natural resources laws and regulations will be in accordance with this plan and will be performed by Natural Resources Law Enforcement professionals and/or the Provost Marshal if feasible.

***Conservation Law Enforcement:*** USARAK conservation officers are responsible for enforcing a number of laws and regulations relating to natural resources. The Sikes Act is the primary natural resources law requiring enforcement. The success of hunting and fishing, as well as other outdoor recreation programs, is highly dependent on adequate enforcement.

***Trespass Enforcement:*** Crossing the installation boundary or the internal boundary of an off-limits area without approval constitutes trespass. Lack of boundary markers contributes to this problem. Little of the installation boundary is fenced or marked with signs. Much of the trespassing that occurs on Fort Wainwright is intentional. Marking the boundary reduces accidental trespassing, but the effect on intentional trespass is minimal. Boundary marking can be effective only in concert with enforcement efforts associated with willful trespass. Fencing is better than boundary marking, but its effectiveness depends on intensive maintenance efforts. Fencing without a maintenance commitment is not cost effective. The overall reduction of illegal activities depends on a reduction in trespass.

Trespass is the most frequent infraction occurring on military installations, which is often the precursor to other illegal activities. Simply crossing the boundary without approval constitutes this action. The most common infraction is illegal entry of the installation, which is often the precursor to other illegal range activities. Most illegal activities either directly or indirectly affect natural resources. Reducing illegal trespass could also reduce illegal range activity.

Trespass often is associated with off-road vehicle (ORV) activity. With the exception of snowmobiling or four-wheeling on established trails and in areas designated for their use, nonmilitary ORV activity is prohibited in most areas of the post.

Unauthorized ORV activity occurs to some degree along much of the post boundary, but most of the trespass problem at Fort Wainwright is related to hunters going into the Stuart Creek and Alpha Impact areas. Failure to enforce hunting, fishing, and trapping check-in requirements makes trespassing difficult to control on Fort Wainwright.

ORV activity presents at least four potential problems for USARAK. The first is possible exposure to dangers associated with unexploded ordnance and ongoing shelling and firing. Generally, artillery and mortar firing are restricted to the impact areas, surrounded by a 300-meter buffer zone. This narrow buffer virtually ensures that unexploded ordnance is contained within impact area boundaries. Risk increases as people get closer to the actual impact area. The point can be made that ordnance is found outside the boundary, but this rationale does not reduce the significant increase in danger to trespassers within these boundaries. ORV trespass is particularly dangerous due to the places these vehicles can go and their weight, making them vulnerable to unexploded ordnance just beneath the surface.

The second problem associated with illegal ORV use is interference with ongoing military activities. The presence of unauthorized ORVs can disrupt military training to varying degrees depending upon the location and type of exercise being conducted. In some cases, it disrupts hundreds of troops in the field, and on small arms ranges, it can be just as dangerous as accessing an impact area. The illegal ORV operator has no idea if, when, or where these ranges are being used.

The third and most critical factor to natural resources management and protection is damage caused to soils and vegetation. This may seem insignificant compared to the more obvious damage done by military maneuvers, but effects are cumulative. ORVs of all kinds seem to make use of places that are relatively unaffected by military vehicles. The damage they cause to wet, boggy areas and more rugged, steep terrain can be significant. These areas, particularly the subalpine and alpine areas, are very important to the overall ecology of Alaska.

Finally, unauthorized use of ORVs on Fort Wainwright often leads to other illegal activities (including theft, vandalism, poaching and other fish and wildlife violations, etc.).

*Theft and Vandalism:* Theft of military ordnance (both unexploded and debris) and other items is an important issue with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other enforcement agencies. These agencies work with military installations where this is a serious problem. People who enter Fort Wainwright and other installations to steal military ordnance and other items are called “scrappers.” This issue is not thought to be as serious at Fort Wainwright as it is at some other installations in the nation.

A connection exists between theft and natural resources management. Besides the obvious direct damage caused to the ecosystem discussed in the ORV section above, an atmosphere is created in which protection of natural resources becomes very difficult as fences are torn down, markers and equipment stolen, etc. The most common item stolen from Fort Wainwright is probably firewood.

Fort Wainwright has a few cultural resources of moderate historic value. Primary among these are homesteader cabins that are easily located and relatively open to irreparable damage and theft.

Cultural artifacts have value both for personal enjoyment and commercial sale. Protection of cultural resources is directly related to the control of trespassers. When cultural resources are discovered, it is often important to place the general area off-limits to military training and public recreational use. Care should be taken to control accessibility of marked maps as cultural resources can be easily targeted for theft.

*Interaction with the Public:* In many cases, conservation officers may be the primary contact between USARAK natural resources management and the public. This is a very important role for the conservation officers because they represent not only the conservation program but also all of USARAK. These contacts are an excellent opportunity for USARAK to accomplish public outreach, awareness, and education.

*Conservation Officer Training:* AR 200-3 and the Sikes Act require effective natural resources law enforcement on military installations. There are requirements that this enforcement be closely coordinated with the natural resources organization and that enforcement be accomplished by professionally trained personnel. A generally recognized requirement exists for a 40-hour-minimum annual refresher training for enforcement officers. Less training than this opens the employer to liability risks in the event of legally debatable officer actions.

The Alaska State Troopers provide training. Wardens must qualify with assigned weapons regularly. The National Military Fish and Wildlife Association offers annual training for experienced wardens. This one-week training uses highly qualified instructors, many of whom have national reputations. The course is open to all DOD and is held on various military installations. This is the most commonly used course by military installations for refresher training.

***Proposed Management:***

**Table 6-7. Conservation Enforcement Management.**

OBJECTIVE	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	IMPLEMENTATION				
			2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Conduct enforcement of conservation laws.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct trespass enforcement.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct conservation enforcement training.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x
Interact with public.	USARAK Conservation	High	x	x	x	x	x

***Other Management Alternatives Considered and Eliminated:*** There are other potential methods for conducting conservation enforcement management. The proposed management actions listed above carefully balance the needs of the military mission, recreation, the public and the ecosystem. Providing less stringent conservation enforcement actions would not comply with various laws. Providing more stringent conservation enforcement actions would be cost prohibitive to the Army and impact its mission.

### **6.3.5 Conservation Enforcement Responsibilities**

The Commander, Arctic Law Enforcement Command Provost Marshal, is the USARAK game warden. The Commander is responsible for coordination and supervision of fish and wildlife law enforcement on all Army lands in Alaska. The Provost Marshal at Fort Wainwright appoints Military Police personnel to serve as game wardens. This system of fish and wildlife enforcement has been in place since establishment of the installation. The Provost Marshal supervises wildlife enforcement officers. They also coordinate and receive technical direction from the Chief of Natural Resources in accordance with Army Regulation 200-3.

Fort Wainwright's fish and wildlife enforcement has concurrent jurisdiction. It can be performed by officers with federal or state commissions. Enforcement is a joint responsibility of USARAK, Alaska State Troopers and law enforcement officers from BLM or USFWS. The federal magistrate adjudicates citations written by USARAK officers, unless they are military personnel who violate only post regulations. In these cases, military commanders adjudicate citations. Trooper-issued citations use the state system for adjudication.

Military Police on Fort Wainwright also have responsibilities directly tied to outdoor recreation, specifically the issuance of hunting, trapping, and fishing permits.

DPW, MWR, LEC, BLM, USFWS, ADF&G all have conservation enforcement responsibilities on Fort Wainwright.

## **6.4 Cultural Resources**

The cultural resources program is described in the USARAK Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP). The purpose of covering cultural resources in this INRMP is to ensure there is integration between cultural and natural resources management. Therefore, the cultural resources management plan, cultural resources surveys, and cultural resources protection and compliance are discussed below.

Cultural resources protection programs at Fort Wainwright are conducted in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. Section 470, as amended), the Archeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. Section 470aa-47011), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (42 U.S.C.), the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 U.S.C. Section 3001 *et seq.*), DOD Directive 4710.1 (*Archeological and Historic Resources Management*, 1984), and AR 200-4 (*Cultural Resources Management*, draft). BLM also has responsibility for cultural resources compliance on withdrawal lands on Fort Wainwright.

### **6.4.1 Cultural Resources Program Goals and Objectives**

Cultural resources management goals and objectives are:

- Protect cultural and historic resources on Fort Wainwright.
- Ensure USARAK's natural resources program complies with the NHPA.

### **6.4.2 Cultural Resources Planning**

Cultural resources program management includes all the planning, budgeting, organizing, and overseeing contracts necessary to implement the cultural resources program. The primary emphasis for this component of the cultural resources program is the preparation and update of the ICRMP every five years. This INRMP does not attempt to serve as the cultural resources management plan. A cultural resources management plan has been developed under a separate cover. The plan is required by the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA) for all of Fort Wainwright. The *Fort Wainwright Resource Management Plan* (BLM and U.S. Army, 1994) also directs that the BLM and Army, in consultation with SHPO, develop an ICRMP.

### **6.4.3 Cultural Resources Inventory and Monitoring**

Section 110, NHPA requires cultural resources surveys. These surveys are required to be conducted on all of Fort Wainwright lands. These surveys have been conducted opportunistically in the past, concentrating on areas where disturbance from the military mission is likely. These surveys are not complete on Fort Wainwright.

Another effort that will help prioritize the lands that need to be surveyed is the development of a predictive model for archaeological resources. Northern Land Use, Inc. drafted the first predictive model for Fort Wainwright and USARAK is continuing to update and refine it. The predictive model will eventually be the centerpiece of a programmatic agreement with the SHPO to deal with the potential impacts of military training and natural resources management on cultural resources.

#### **6.4.4 Cultural Resources Management**

*Section 106, NHPA Compliance:* Natural resources projects are sometimes overlooked as potential causes of adverse impacts to archeological sites. USARAK will address cultural resources program requirements, as well as meet goals of natural resources programs. Natural and cultural resources managers at Fort Wainwright will work closely with one another during development of natural resources projects. Through this partnership, Fort Wainwright will provide both natural and cultural resources for future generations to enjoy.

Activities such as vegetation clearing, timber removal, firebreak construction, and training land rehabilitation are potentially damaging to cultural resources. AR 200-4 and the laws upon which it is predicated require that such undertakings be accomplished in a manner consistent with protection of cultural resources.

Natural resources projects with ground-disturbing activities will be processed through the Fort Wainwright cultural resources manager to prevent activities from impacting cultural resources. Furthermore, the cultural resources manager will be consulted during long-range policy planning, such as this INRMP.

Some land management undertakings will have no effect on historic properties at Fort Wainwright. However, to meet this list of exclusions, projects must be evaluated by a professional who meets applicable standards in 36 CFR § 61, appendix A.

ERD will review proposed projects by consulting guidelines provided in implementing regulations for the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800) to determine their effect on cultural resources sites. Any project assessed as having an effect on a cultural resources site on Fort Wainwright will be coordinated with Alaska SHPO.

*Protect and Conserve Cultural Resources:* There are cultural resources in the Fort Wainwright training areas that require protection from military training and natural resources activities. Protection measures are primarily control of access to these sites, which is accomplished by showing these areas as restricted on the environmental limitations map.

#### **6.4.5 Cultural Resources Management Responsibilities**

USARAK DPW is responsible for cultural resources management on Fort Wainwright. BLM and USARAK are jointly responsible for conducting Section 110 surveys of archaeological resources in the training areas. USARAK is responsible for conducting Section 106, NHPA actions for undertakings that result from natural resources management and military training.



*Figure 6-1a. Outdoor Recreation Management Areas (FWA).*

*Figure 6-1b. Outdoor Recreation Management Areas (YTA).*

*Figure 6-1c. Hunting Areas.*